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Solid Waste Management System in Hambantota District

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Solid waste is a growing problem in Sri Lanka and this problem is aggravated due to absence of proper management system in the country. In this research study, attention was given to study the solid waste management system in arid zone, since very little such research has been conducted in the dry zone in Sri Lanka. Most of the research activities related to solid waste management have been done in the area of wet zone in Sri Lanka, as most of the main cities situated in the wet zone. Solid waste management in dry zone, especially in arid zone is also very important as people in these areas use ground water for their drinking purpose.

Hambantota district is selected for our research study in order to understand the current solid waste management system in the district, preliminary survey has been conducted in all local authorities in the Hambantota district. There is no proper garbage discharge system in the area, open dumping and open burning of waste is taking place. Plastic bins are common for waste collection but due to poor awareness of the residents in the area, garbage is dumped alongside these. Composting has been carried out on various scales with varying degrees of success at few local authorities. Due to lack of technical knowledge on the compost production and non availability of enough machinery caused abandon of the compost sites in many local authorities. The bio-gas generation from market waste is only tested in Hambantota urban council as a pilot project.

Based on the solid waste management survey conducted in Hambantota district, necessity of a National Strategy for solid waste management is highlighted. It can be concluded that, in order to implement a proper solid waste management system in the country, responsibilities on solid waste management should be shared with national government bodies, local authorities, private sector and general public.